

“insider account” of the long political struggle for Nunavut that has yet appeared, Jose Kusugak explains the goals and the strategy that led to the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement and the establishment of Nunavut as a separate territory. He emphasizes patience, focus, determination, and flexibility in explaining the reasons for particular tradeoffs and outcomes.

The collection is enriched by several articles that treat subjects of direct relevance to the cultural future of Inuit. Drawing upon decades of research, experience, and reflection, George Wenzel eloquently explains the importance of subsistence production and programs for hunter support. In a neatly complementary discussion, Helle Høgh discusses the special case of bowhead whale hunting and its regulation in a way that allows us to see the new consciousness of Nunavutmiut emerging. Laila Sørensen on Inuit broadcasting, Ludger Müller-Wille on Nunavut place names, and Kenn Harper on Inuit writing systems usefully broaden the discussion of Nunavut’s future.

Appropriately, the last chapter is written by Odd Terje Brantenberg, a Norwegian scholar who understands Canadian development very well. Brantenberg situates Nunavut in the global struggle to ensure the thriving of small indigenous societies, and especially “to use the nation state as a building block for ensuring that all cultural groups have a space within its borders” (p. 208). He notes that the Canadian case contradicts the mooted advantage of cultural homogeneity often attributed to the Nordic countries. While recognizing the Canadian achievement of multicultural prosperity, he does not ignore the stresses of diversity and the costs of North American economic integration. Here his analysis converges with that of Amagoalik and Jull, and all together illuminate the beginning of a path of political development based upon compromise and negotiated consent, rather than conquest.

The analytical integrity of this volume is remarkable, especially considering that the editors reside in three different locations (Iqaluit, Denmark, and Australia) and the contributors write from Europe, Australia, and various parts of Canada. Recognizing this, it seems churlish to complain about small typographical errors, of which there are certainly too many. (Not trying, I found twelve.) These do not impede comprehension, however, and are somewhat compensated by other useful features of the book: a good chart-form chronology of the history of Nunavut, two maps, and a fine bibliography.

For the editors’ next book about Nunavut (why not a series?) may I suggest a few more topics: primary, secondary, and post-secondary education; the evolving public administration and especially the serious efforts underway to craft a bureaucracy suitable to the cultures of Nunavut; experiments and achievements in the use of the Internet for cultural communication, land use planning and administrative coordination; and evolving relations between citizens, the Nunavut Government, and the many and various regulatory boards set into motion by the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement. There are not so many experiments in

all the world of advancing democracy and peaceful change, and there is much to learn from this one.

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JOURNAL OF OCCURRENCES AT THE FORKS OF THE LEWES AND PELLY RIVERS MAY 1848 TO SEPTEMBER 1852. Edited by LLEWELLYN R. JOHNSON and DOMINIQUE LEGROS. Whitehorse: Heritage Branch, Government of the Yukon, 2000. Occasional Papers in Yukon History, No. 2. ISBN 1-55018-976-X. xiv + 153 p., maps, b&w illus., notes, index. Softbound. No charge.

The Hudson’s Bay Company began to expand its activities into the Yukon River basin in the summer of 1840, when Robert Campbell first sighted the waters of the Pelly River from Pelly Banks. A post was established there in the winter of 1842–43, and in 1848 Campbell and James Stewart founded the post of Fort Selkirk at the confluence of the Pelly and the Lewes (as the upper Yukon River was then known). Over the next four years, Campbell and Stewart would make a valiant attempt to capture the trade and harvest the furs of the Upper Yukon drainage. But the dice were loaded against them. The Company was badly overextended in terms of the route by which the Fort Selkirk trade goods, supplies, and furs had to travel, to the point that Campbell and Stewart received no supplies or trade goods for several years in a row. This was in part due to the incompetence of P.C. Pambrun, the clerk who for most of the period was in charge of the posts at Frances Lake and Pelly Banks, key points on the supply line. And, worst of all, Campbell and Stewart had to contend with the hostility of the Chilkat Indians, traditional middlemen between the Pacific coast and the Indians of the upper and middle Yukon basins. In only four years, this combination of factors would force the Hudson’s Bay Company to cut its losses and retreat from the Upper Yukon basin.

The Fort Selkirk post journals kept by Campbell and Stewart over the four-year period, preserved in the National Archives of Canada, have now been edited by Llewellyn Johnson and Dominique Legros. The journals cover the daily activities of the post (or posts, since Fort Selkirk was moved a short distance in the spring of 1851) with only a few gaps. On some days, the entry is frustratingly laconic, e.g., “Heavy rain.” or “No news.” At the other extreme is the entry for Sunday, 22 August 1852, when some visiting Chilkats went on the rampage and looted the post, and Campbell and the few servants at the post at the time barely escaped with their lives. Here Stewart’s detailed description is one of high drama. It was largely because of this incident (in combination with a continuing series of annual losses from the post’s trade) that Chief Factor James Anderson, in charge of the Mackenzie

River District, decided to cut his losses and withdraw from the Upper Yukon basin.

The Fort Selkirk post journals are extremely valuable historical documents, providing considerable detail about the furs being harvested, the game being hunted, and the movements and distribution of the various Indian bands. Rather atypically (for Company journals), they reveal a degree of mutual high regard, even warm affection, expressed by both Stewart and Campbell. The editors and the Yukon Heritage Branch are to be commended for making these journals available in published form.

But one cannot help feeling that the considerable potential of these documents has not been fully realized. For one thing, the editors provide no clear indication that Fort Selkirk was one of the most remote posts in the Company's territories and certainly the most difficult of access. The route from Fort Simpson (headquarters of the Mackenzie River District and hence the immediate supply base for Fort Selkirk) stretched for about 1800 km. For some 1000 km of that distance, one had to travel upstream via the Liard and Frances Rivers to Frances Lake, a route strewn with rapids, including those of the notorious Whirlpool Canyon. From Frances Lake, a brutal portage of 130 km led across to the headwaters of the Pelly.

The editors might also have added greatly to the volume had they provided more information (via footnotes or endnotes) on the travels of both Campbell and Stewart when they were absent from the post. Thus, in the entry for 10 April 1850, we learn of Stewart's departure for Fort Simpson in the following terms: "He started with as gay & buoyant a heart as if only going a short distance on foot to a dinner party." Then on 13 November 1850, Stewart records his return with the bald statement: "Late last evening I arrived... & found all well at the Fort." Hidden between these two entries is the story of a quite remarkable journey. On reaching Pelly Banks, Stewart found that the post had been burned and looted by the Chilkats early in the winter. Mr. Pambrun and one servant were barely alive; two others and some Indians had died of starvation. As a result, Stewart was unable to replenish his supplies and had to rely on hunting on the brutal overland trek to Fort Halkett on the Liard. From there, he was able to travel downstream to Fort Simpson by boat. The return trip was less eventful, but as arduous as ever by that route. Surely a major trip of this type (totalling some 3600 km) deserves at least a bare outline in a footnote.

Unfortunately, the introduction focuses more on the authorship of the different parts of the journals and their provenance than on the background of the enterprise or the establishment, operation, and abandonment of the post. The footnotes and endnotes are more informative, but both they and the introduction contain some surprising errors. Thus, the officer in charge of the Mackenzie River District is identified in a note on p. 1 as "Chief Trader Murdock McPhearson," and later as "McPearson." The gentleman in question was Murdoch McPherson.

On p. viii, we are informed that Stewart "left no writings of his time at Fort Selkirk or any period of his life with the Hudson's Bay Company." In fact, his journal of his expedition down the Back River with James Anderson in 1855 (a Company initiative) plus ancillary documents, including his report to George Simpson, may be found in the Provincial Archives of Alberta at MS 74.1/137.

On p. ix, the editors state (correctly) that Stewart was born in Quebec City, but then, only two paragraphs later, they state that he was born in Upper Canada! But perhaps the most bizarre misinterpretation comes in a footnote on p. 13, supposedly clarifying the word "weavies," which identifies them as belonging to the family of weaver birds! In fact, "weavies" is either a mistranscription or a slight variant on the word "wavies," the common name throughout the North for the snow goose (*Chen caerulescens*).

Strangely lacking from this volume is even the scantiest of bibliographies or a list of further reading. The failure even to mention, for example, Clifford Wilson's excellent biography of Campbell, entitled *Campbell of the Yukon* (Toronto, Macmillan of Canada, 1970), is incomprehensible.

In short, on the one hand this edited version of the Fort Selkirk journals kept during the brief life of that Hudson's Bay Company post represents a valuable addition to the fur trade literature and to the history of the Yukon. On the other hand, it can only be regretted that the editors did not take fuller advantage of their opportunity by providing a more informative introduction and more detailed notes.

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IN THE LAND OF WHITE DEATH. By VALERIAN ALBANOV. Translated by ALISON ANDERSON and WILLIAM BARR, introduction by DAVID ROBERTS. New York: Random House Modern Library, 2000. 205 p., 3 maps, 2 illus., index. Hardbound. US\$21.95, Cdn\$32.95.

Early in his ordeal on the ice of the Arctic Ocean north of the Franz Josef Archipelago, Valerian Albanov broods about all that has gone wrong on his expedition, all the sufferings that he and his companions have endured in the past, are enduring in the present, and will endure in the future—if they are fortunate enough to survive. He dreams that if he does survive, he will go south to the shores of the Caspian Sea and "gorge on apricots, oranges, and grapes" (p. 45). Then he thinks what many explorers have thought when they found themselves at the mercy of natural forces in the wild places of the world: "One should not poke one's nose into places where Nature does not want the presence of man" (p. 45).